

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

- Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method of facilitating operations of a plurality of Independent Retailers ("IR's"), said method comprising: (a) communicating over a computer network from a ~~service bureau or~~ a plurality of headquarters of a chain of retail stores to their respective IR's; (b) displaying to said IR's a plurality of services for said IR's, for said IR's to select at least one service, wherein said services comprise procurement; (c) receiving over said computer network a message from at least one of said IR's to its respective headquarters ~~or a service bureau~~ showing said at least one selected service from said at least one store; and (d) serving up to said IR's said at least one selected service.
- Claim 2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said plurality of services for said IR's further comprises transaction services, communities services, brand deployment services, education support services, business operating systems services, and customer support services.

- Claim 3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising steps for entering real-time communications between any of said IR's and a customer service representative of said service or a service bureau, and wherein said steps for communication can be entered into during any step of said method.
- Claim 4. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said computer network comprises a client-server environment comprising the Internet, an extranet, a wide area network, a metropolitan area network, and mixtures thereof.
- Claim 5. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein said transaction services comprises: (a) displaying a plurality of transaction services comprising automatic replenishment, order history, and pricing, for said IR's to select at least one transaction service; (b) receiving over said network a message from at least one of said IR's to said headquarters showing said at least one selected transaction service from said at least one store; and (c) serving up to said IR's said at least one selected transaction service.
- Claims 6-10 (Withdrawn)
- Claim 11. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said computer network comprises a client-server environment comprising the Internet, an extranet, a wide area network, a metropolitan area network, and mixtures thereof.

Claims 12-17 (Withdrawn)

- Claim 18. (Currently Amended) A system for managing a plurality of chains of IR's, said system comprising: (a) communication means for communicating over a computer network from a plurality of headquarters of a chain of IR's to a plurality of said IR's; (b) displaying means for displaying to said IR's a plurality of services for said IR's, and configured to allow said IR's to select at least one service, wherein said services comprise promotion ordering; (c) receiving means for receiving over said network a message from at least one of said IR's to each respective headquarters showing said at least one selected service from said at least one store; and (d) server means for serving up to said IR's said at least one selected service.
- Claim 19. (Original) The system of Claim 18, wherein said plurality of services for said IR's further comprises transaction services, communities services, brand deployment services, education support services, operations support services, and customer support services.
- Claim 20. (Original) The system of Claim 19, wherein said transaction services comprises: (a) displaying a plurality of transaction services comprising automatic replenishment, order history, and pricing, for said IR's to select at least one transaction service; (b) receiving over said network a message from at least one of said IR's to said headquarters showing said at least one selected transaction

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service from said at least one store; and (c) serving up to said IR's  
said at least one selected transaction service.

Claims 21-25(Withdrawn)

Claim 26. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 18, wherein said  
computer network comprises a client-server environment  
comprising the Internet, an extranet, a wide area network, a  
metropolitan area network, and mixtures thereof.